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Dr. Barnes, who is Associate Professor of Physics at McGill University, Montreal, has had special opportunities for studying the difficulties which the ice causes in the St. Lawrence River in spite of the fact that the temperature of the water "never varies more than a few thousandths of a degree from the freezing-point even though the temperature of the air may be 30° or 40° lower." He discusses the three kinds of ice—surface ice, anchor ice, formed in the bed of a river, and frazil, which consists of small individual crystals at the surface.

Frazil causes most trouble. It is formed in rapids, takes refuge under surface ice, in the quiet water below them, and adheres to its under surface. Thus the ice becomes thicker and thicker until it often chokes the channel of the river and causes a flood. Frazil also clogs machinery and thus interferes with the use of water power at Montreal.

By using the Callendar platinum resistance thermometer, Dr. Barnes was able to make observations of great accuracy as to the conditions existing when frazil and anchor ice are formed. The results of his temperature observations are among the most important in the book. He treats of the natural processes of heat transference, the physical constants of ice, the various methods of determining ice structure, water temperatures, and other questions useful to students of the subject.

The remainder of his book is devoted to an exhaustive study of anchor ice and frazil, and the interference of the latter with the use of water-power machinery. He believes that "a thorough understanding of the laws underlying the formation of ice will lead to methods, as it has already done in part, which will so temper the effects of ice in our northern rivers as to render them no longer a bar to the full development and utilization of our vast water powers."

The World's Peoples. A Popular Account of Their Bodily and Mental Characters, Beliefs, Traditions, Political and Social Institutions. By A. H. Keane. xii and 434 pp., 270 Illustrations from Photographs, and Index. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908. (Price, \$2.)

Dr. Keane's aim was to present in a volume of moderate size a clear and comprehensive picture of the people of the world as they exist to-day. It was a task requiring much compression, for the subject is vast and room had to be made also for an exceptionally large number of illustrations. In spite of the narrow limits, however, Dr. Keane has given an edifying and adequate treatment to the great subject in all its broader aspects. Only one who is a master of the subject could do this, and then only by avoiding debatable topics and limiting detailed treatment of primitive ways to the more important savage peoples. The book deals with the established facts of anthropology and is a very interesting and profitable discussion of man as he is to-day. Hundreds of truth-telling photographs reinforce the text. There is a place for this popular account of the human race written with literary skill and scientific judgment.

La France, Tableau Géographique par V. P. Vidal de la Blache.
Pp. viii-366. 4to. Hachette et Cie., Paris, 1908.

Aside from the illustrations and some very fair maps, the chief merit of this ponderous volume consists in broad margins and a certain number of blank pages. The text, after careful reading, leaves two impressions; one, of what Hamlet calls "Words, words, words"; the other, of admiration for the author who has

performed the wonderful feat of converting the French language, naturally clear and logical, into a jumble like that of a cloudy metaphysical work in German. Not content with an accumulation of truisms without parallel in number, Mr. Vidal de la Blache has enveloped these in a fog of ornamental and explanatory phrases.

The book is geographical in the broadest sense of the word. To give an approximate idea of what it purports to be we translate from the preface:

The history of a people is inseparable from the country that people inhabits. We cannot figure to ourselves the Greek nation elsewhere than around the Grecian Sea, the Englishman elsewhere than on his island, the American elsewhere than in the vast expanse of the United States. It is the purpose of these pages to explain how far this is the case with the people whose history is incorporated with the soil of France.

In France the relations between man and the soil bear the stamp of antiquity and continuity which is original. At an early day human establishments appear to have acquired there a character of permanence; man remained there because he found, together with the means of subsistence, the materials for his buildings and his industry. He has thus led, for long centuries, a local life that slowly became impregnated by the juice of the soil. An adaptation resulted, thanks to the habits and customs transmitted and kept up on the sites where they had arisen. It is a fact, often observed in our country, that the inhabitants have from time immemorial succeeded each other in the same places. The levels of springs, calcareous rocks suitable for construction and defence, were originally points of attraction, that were scarcely abandoned in subsequent days. At Loches we see the castle of the Valois on Roman foundations, resting, in turn, on tufa with grottoes that may have been primitive abodes.

With us man has been for a long time the faithful disciple of the soil, hence the study of this soil will contribute to enlighten us on the character, habits, and tendencies of its dweller. In order to obtain precise results this study must be thoroughly reasoned—that is: it must connect the aspect of the soil of to-day with the nature (composition) of its geological past. Let us not fear to injure, in this way, the impression received from the outlines of the landscape, from the topography, the contours of the horizon, the outward appearance of things. On the contrary, the understanding of the causes renders their co-ordination and harmony more enjoyable.

In the descriptive sections of this book I have endeavoured to reproduce a physiognomy that has appeared to me as at once varied, attractive and engaging. I should desire to have succeeded in fixing some of the impressions conceived by me while traversing in every direction this so deeply humanized-country, which is at the same time not degraded by civilization. In this country the mind is solicited by reflecting thought, but it constantly turns back to the sight of its fields, its mountains and seas, alternately smiling and imposing as to a source of causes.

This is a specimen of how the author expresses his ideas all throughout the book. What he probably means to say is that man is inseparable from nature, and that the condition of nature goes back to and was prepared in periods anterior to the existence of mankind. If these ideas were properly carried out and substantiated by the material which the author certainly commands, the book would be as new as invaluable. A lengthy introduction follows this preface. The only thing clear about it is the title. It reads, "Geographical Personality of France." We may discern that this "Personality" is the outgrowth of a great number of influences, named, placed in relation to each other, but without system or coördination. There are positive data but they are so shrouded and their developments so constantly shifting, that we never arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. Besides there are not unimportant omissions. In his attempt to trace the lines of early migrations, Mr. Vidal de la Blache treats of the forests as mere impediments and completely forgets the importance of hunting as a means of subsistence for primitive peoples. The forests of Germany, for instance, were for early mankind as much of a resource and a guidance and even more so than the arable lands, and the French forests were as useful to the original Celts as treeless expanses on which a very limited agriculture could be sustained. Of the importance of fishing where great water-courses or the ocean permitted the author seems to have no idea. In indicating the routes by which tin may have reached central and

western Europe, he ignores the fact that tin also reached southern Germany and Switzerland through Italy and Idria, and since it is his tendency to place much stress on the penetration of France by human currents of German origin in former times, he should not have lost sight of this interesting, though newly discovered fact.

When we turn to the subsequent Chapters or rather "Parts" of the volume we are confronted by what the author calls "Regional Description." We are, therefore, entitled to find in it a description of France by geographical sections according to the vague indications expressed in the preface. The vagueness is richly represented and carried out with great thoroughness. Fact, so ardently looked for by the reader and possessed by the author in abundance, is lost in sounding phrases. Let us take, for instance, what he says about the "Site of Paris":

Between the forests occupying the sands of the heights and the gravels enclosed around Paris by river-branches, are seen intervals (expanses) that always were open, sunny and more or less protected from overflows. On the south the slimy plateau with calcareous subsoil of Villejuif, exceeding by 60 mètres in height the plateau of the Seine, intercalates itself between the masses of timber that stand yet in the Brie, and those of the Hurepoix. Quarries and subterraneous galleries perforate it. Sheets or rugs covered by crops expand still over it to the gates of the capital. On the north between the forests of Bondy on one hand and those of Montmorency and Carnelle on the other, we soon see rising a dry and fertile platform that joins itself to the platform of the Valois. It was these miry and porous expanses which, ere the Brie had divested itself of its timber, directly contiguous to the great bow of the Seine, allowed the existence of a grouping of population; they are what formed that nucleus of crystallization which is the rudiment of every human society. Man found there easily and at the same time, food and material for constructions, that is, the requirements for stability and increase. It was easy afterwards for the populations who settled there, to improve, little by little, the various advantages of the places where they had made their home. The meanderings of the rivers, the sinuosities of hill-sides, openings in the timber offered numerous new combinations to their ingenuity and their selection.

We translate as literally as possible and would only add that the author forgets to include in his elements of first attractiveness, that of security, of safety for abode, which was just as important in the earliest times as any of the others mentioned.

Further quotations are useless, the whole book is written in the same manner. It is descriptive, full of hints at facts, but without salient data. No definite characteristics; a would-be geography without the idea that geography is an exact science and that, while it manifestly must draw within its compass other branches of science and render them subservient to its aims, these should be treated with equal consideration to concreteness and clearness of exposition. To reduce geography to a dry tabular representation in which figures play the principal part, is certainly not the way to present it, but to diffuse it into mere description without the aid of positive fact is an equally erroneous and far more hurtful extreme. This extreme has been, unfortunately for what he *could* have done, the line which Mr. Vidal de la Blache has followed. A. F. B.

The Continent of Opportunity. The South American Republics—Their History, Their Resources, Their Outlook. Together with a Traveller's Impressions of Present-Day Conditions. By Francis E. Clark. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1907.

Five months spent in "study" of *eight* South American Republics and in travelling fifteen thousand miles by sea authorize Mr. Clark to thrust upon a benevolent public an utterly worthless volume, poorly illustrated and, furthermore, inspired by religious proselytism of a rather blustering nature. To point out the errors and misstatements in regard to history, ethnography, geography